Decrease in tiger population due to poaching

338. DR. MAM. RAMASWAMY:
SHRI VEDPRAKASH P. GOYAL:

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the population of tigers in the country is fast depleting due to poaching;

(b) if so, whether it is also a fact that China and Tibet are the most popular markets for tiger products due to which poachers kill tigers recklessly;

(c) whether the Central Government propose to revive the protocol on tiger conservation with China which was signed in 1995;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the other measures taken to protect the tigers from being poached recklessly?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) and (b) There is no country level declining trend discernable in the tiger population during the last three decades. The details of All India tiger estimation since 1972 are at Statement-I. (See below)

Reports on trafficking in tiger/leopard body parts and their sale across the borders in China and Tibet have come to light, which is one of the causative factors for tiger poaching.

(c) and (d) Efforts have been taken for bilateral discussion with China with in the ambit of Indo-Chinese Protocol on Tiger Conservation.

(e) The measures taken by the Government of India to protect the tigers are at Statement-ll.

Statement-I

Population of tigers in the country as reported by the States

Sl. No.	Name of State	1972	1979	1984	1989	1993	1997	2001-02**
1.	Andhra Pradesh	35	148	164	235	197	171	192
2.	Arunachal Pradesh	69	139	219	135	180	*	61***
3.	Assam	147	300	376	376	325	458	354
4.	Bihar	85	110	138	157	137	103	76
5.	Chhattisgarh	—	—	—	—	--	--	227
6.	Delhi	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
7.	Goa	—	—	—	2	3	6	5
8.	Gujarat	8	7	9	9	5	1	Nil
9.	Haryana	—	—	1	—	Nil	Nil	Nil
10.	Himachal Pradesh					NiI	Nil	Nil
11.	Jammu & Kashmir					Nil	Nil	Nil
12.	Jharkhand	—	—	—	—	Nil	Nil	34
13.	Karnataka	102	156	202	257	305	350	401
14.	Kerala	60	134	89	45	57	73	71
15.	Madhya Pradesh	457	529	786	985	912	927	740
16.	Maharashtra	160	174	301	417	276	257	238
17.	Manipur	1	10	6	31	*	*	Nil
18.	Meghalaya	32	35	125	34	53	*	47
19.	Mizoram	—	65	33	18	28	12	28
20.	Nagaland	80	102	104	104	83	*	23
21.	Orissa	142	173	202	243	226	194	173
22.	Punjab	—	—	—	—	Nil	Nil	Nil
23.	Rajasthan	74	79	96	99	64	58	58
24.	Sikkim	—	—	2	4	2	*	NR
25.	Tamil Nadu	33	65	97	95	97	62	60
26.	Tripura	7	6	5	—	Nil	*	NR
27.	Uttaranchal	—	—	—	—	****	****	251
28.	Uttar Pradesh	262	487	698	735	465	475	284
29.	West Bengal	73	296	352	353	335	361	349
	TOTAL:	1827	3015	4005	4334	3750	3508	3642

N.R.- Not reported by State
* Tiger census was not carried out
** Under compilation/vetting
*** Only for Namdapha Tigar Reserve
*** Figures Included in undivided State
* Entire State not covered.

Statemen-II

Measures taken for Tiger Conservation by Government of India

1. Ongoing Funding Schemes:

   Funding and technical help are provided to States under the Centrally Sponsored Schemes of "Project Tiger", "Assistance to National Parks & Sanctuaries" and "Project Elephant" for enhancing the capacity and infrastrcture of States to provide effective protection-to wild animals including tiger.

2. Legal Measures Taken:

   (i) Legal protection has been provided to wild animals under the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972, which has been amended and made more stringent.

   (ii) The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has been empowered under the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 to apprehend and prosecute wildlife offenders.

3. Administrative and other Measures:

   (i) A National Wildlife Action Plan (2002-16) has been adopted by the Indian Board for Wildlife under the Chairmanship of the Prime Minister in January 2002, which outlines the strategy for conservation and protection of wildlife in the country.

   (ii) Government of India has set-up regional and subregional offices for wildlife preservation in major export and trade centres of the country to prevent smuggling of wild animals and their products.

4. International Conventions:

   India is signatory to many international conventions relating to biodiversity conservation and control of illegal trade in wild flora and fauna.

5. Bilateral Agreements:

   India has bilateral agreements with Nepal and China for controlling trans-boundary illegal trade in wildlife.

6. Global tiger Forum:

A Global tiger Forum of tiger range countries has been created for addressing international issues relating to tiger conservation.

7. Initiatives Taken for eliciting public support:

Complementary inputs for Ecodevelopment and voluntary village relocation provided earlier in separate projects have now been merged with Project Tiger as an "Umbrella Scheme".

Under the externally aided "India Eco-development Project", as many as 572 eco-development committees have been formed in seven Projected Areas (which included six Tiger Reserves) covering 75,600 families, to reduce the dependency of local people on Protected Area resources, with reciprocal commitments. An amount of Rs. 15,692.30 lakhs has been provided to States for 6 Tiger Reserves till the completion of this Project in 2004.

8. Other Initiatives Taken:

— Eight more potential sites have been identified for Project Tiger coverage.

— "Project Allowance" has been provided under the scheme to field staff working in tiger reserves.

— Regional Monitoring of Tiger Reserves has been done by a group of experts as per the normative standards of the Ministry.

— 100% Central Assistance is provided for deploying anti-poaching strike squads in Tiger Reserves, apart from expenditure relating to research, veterinary, monitoring and evaluation, compensation to the legal heir of staff/person killed while performing duty, and for monitoring of tiger population.

— Information and communication technology is under use for linking important tiger reserves in the GIS Domain for evolving a management support system and crime detection, dissemination of information through web and evolving a 'National Tiger Monitoring and Habitat Evaluation System' with regional protocols.

— The allocation under Project Tiger has been enhanced from Rs. 7500 lakhs in the IX Plan to Rs. 15,000 lakhs in the X Plan.

— Country level appraisal of habitat fragmentation has been done to facilitate restorative inputs.

Poaching in Bandhavgarh sanctuary

339. SHRI KALRAJ MISHRA: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Bandhavgarh sanctuary in Madhya Pradesh continues to be a poacher's paradise and hunting ground for tigers;

(b) if so, the number of cases to tiger poaching detected or reported during 2004-05 and so far; and

(c) whether a tiger with wire-noose around its neck was spotted in early November this year; and if so, the steps taken and being taken by Government to effectively prevent tiger hunting in Bandhavgarh and other sanctuaries in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) and (b) No, Sir. As per information received from the State, there has been no instance of tiger poaching during 2004-05 and till date.

(c) As per information received from State, a male tiger with a wirenoose around his neck was spotted in the park on 4.11.2005, which was removed by the park authorities the next day. The steps taken by the Government of India for protecting wildlife are stated at Statement.

Statement

Steps taken by the Government of India for protecting wildlife

(i) Legal protection has been provided to wild animals including tigers against hunting and commercial exploitation under the provisions of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972.

(ii) Financial and technical help is being extended to States under Centrally Sponsored Schemes for enhancing the capacity and infrastructure to provide effective protection to wild animals.